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18/1/2025

17 Colville Place, London W1T 2BN

SUPPORTING DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

1.0 Introduction

This Design, Access, and Heritage Statement supports the planning application for the refurbishment and extension of 17 Colville Place, located in the Charlotte Street Conservation Area within the London Borough of Camden. The proposal seeks to: Reconfigure the internal layout to provide improved living accommodation across basement to third floor.

- Install walk on glass over front light well
- Enlarge the rear basement light well and enlarge basement floor rear window with contemporary glazing.
- Replace existing front casement windows with timber box sash windows.
- Replace and install raised rear platform and steps to rear garden level.
- Enlarge Ground floor rear doors with contemporary glazing
- Enlarge 1st floor rear window with contemporary glazing.
- Replace rear windows to the 2nd and 3rd floors with timber box sash windows.
- Air conditioning condenser to the main roof.

17 Colville Place is not listed, although it stands in close proximity to Grade II-listed properties on the same street (e.g., Nos. 14–16). The applicant's aim is to upgrade the building sensitively to meet 21st-century living standards, while preserving and enhancing the heritage value of Colville Place.

Figure 1: Location Map



Figure 2 and 3: Existing front and rear photos



2.0 Site Context

2.1 Location

Colville Place is a short pedestrian-friendly street off Whitfield Street, near Goodge Street in Fitzrovia. It forms part of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area, characterized by 18th- and 19th-century terraces and a fine urban grain. Colville Place itself was laid out around 1766 by John Colville, and though 17 Colville Place is not an original Georgian structure, the property's scale and appearance nonetheless contribute to the historic mews character.

2.2 Existing Building Description

- Terrace house rebuilding post WWII following bomb damage
- Height & Layout: The building comprises four storeys (basement through third floor) with a mansard roof.
- Front Façade: Yellow Brick elevation, with modern casement window frames (currently somewhat out of character for the conservation area and sash windows nearby). The entrance door leads into the ground-floor reception/kitchen area.

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- Rear Elevation: A stepped rear façade with a partially enclosed courtyard at basement/ground level.
- Internal Configuration:
 - Basement: Currently houses a bedroom, bathroom, utility, and storage spaces.
 - Ground Floor: Contains a reception area and partial kitchen.
 - First/Second/Third Floors: Further bedrooms, bathrooms, and living rooms, with a mansard roof providing top-floor accommodation.

The existing internal arrangement is inefficient with the stairs occupying needly half of the floor plate and suboptimal natural light.

Figure 5: Existing Floor Plans (Basement to Third Floor)

Figure 6: Existing Front & Rear Elevations with notes.

Figure 7: Existing Sections showing the mansard roof shape, floor heights, and staircase layout.

3.0 Heritage Context

- Charlotte Street Conservation Area: Recognized for its Georgian terraces, shopfronts, and mixed residential-commercial uses.
- Surrounding Listed Buildings: Nos. 14–16 on the same terrace are Grade II-listed.
- No. 17 has been rebuilt in the postwar period, following bomb damage that also formed the Crabtree fields behind Colville place.
- Significance: The building's contribution lies primarily in maintaining the terrace's rhythm and scale. Proposed changes must preserve the area's character and pay regard to local architectural references, particularly regarding materials, fenestration, and rooflines.

Figure 4: Historic Map 1799 showing Crabtree Fields in red.



Figure 5: view down Colville place.



4.0 Heritage Assessment

4.1 Significance of the Host Building

Although 17 Colville Place is not listed, it contributes to the overall townscape quality of Colville Place by continuing the terrace line. Its scale and frontage help maintain the area's Georgian proportions.

4.2 Potential Impact on the Conservation Area

- Front Elevation: Retains historic proportions; introduction of more appropriate timber sash windows with glazing bars. This alteration will enhance the traditional appearance of the conservation area. No harmful alterations to the principal façade.
- The walk on glazed roof light will correspond many other glazed vault lights along Colville place. The flush fitting glass will be very inconspicuous and will not detract from the street scene or listed buildings nearby.
- To the Rear Elevation we propose to install new timber box sash windows with double glazing to the 2nd and 3rd floors. These will replace modern casement windows and poor quality sash windows that are incongruous with the conservation area.

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- The alterations to the rear façade at 1st Floor, Ground floor and basement floor levels will not be widely visible from public thoroughfares; thus, the changes are not likely to affect the broader conservation area character. Instead, the updated design provides a contemporary design while using sympathetic brick and fenestration.
- At roof level we propose to install an air conditioning condenser fan unit this will be set away from the boundary party walls by over 1 metre and set towards the rear of the property so there will be no views of this from Colville place and very limited views from any public property. This ensures the conservation area's historic roofscape is preserved.

5.0 The Proposed Development, design and character

- **Install walk on glass over front light well**

Install walk on glass over front light well. Remove metal grating at pavement level. To allow the currently dark, damp and dirty lightwell to be used as part of a ensuite bathroom.

The proposed walk on glass would be opaque and anti-slip with a etched pattern. As per the attached walk on rooflight pdf from roof maker limited.

This walk on glass roof light to the front pavement vault will match many glass roof lights already is still installed along Colville place. The glass will be fitted flush with the pavement to ensure there is no trip hazard and as such will be very inconspicuous.

- **Enlarge the rear basement light well and Enlarge basement floor rear window with contemporary glazing.**

To increase the natural light entering the rear basement bedroom we propose to enlarge the existing recessed light well in the rear garden and install large glazed doors or windows. Being set at basement level there will be no public views of this alteration.

- **Replace existing front casement windows with timber box sash windows.**

We proposed to replace the existing front casement windows with traditional timber box sash windows with double glazing. The new timber sashes will be divided into 6 over 6 panes with traditional ovolo glazing bars, to better match the listed buildings and other properties along Colville place.

- **Replace and install raised rear platform and steps to rear garden level**

There is an existing galvanised steel raised platform and steps from the rear kitchen doors at ground floor level to the garden level. We propose to replace these with walk on glass and composite decking with contemporary railings.

- **Enlarge Ground floor rear doors with contemporary glazing.**

We wish to improve the sense of lights and flow from the kitchen to the rear garden by installing larger glazing at ground floor rear level. The glazing will be clearly contemporary in style and of its time.

The garden benefits from very high sidewalls these are approximately 2.9 metres high along the boundary with no.18 and 2.6 metres high and on the boundary with no.16. As such the proposed changes to the rear ground floor will not affect the neighbours nor be visible from any neighbouring property.

- **Enlarge 1st floor rear window with contemporary glazing.**

Again at first floor level we wish to improve the living conditions with greater light from the rear. We propose to install matching doors and windows to the ground floor but with a 1.1 metre high Juliet balcony railing. The rear wall to the garden is extremely high at 4.16 metres high, which is halfway up the proposed first floor fenestration, As such long views of the proposed first floor windows will be very limited. These proposed doors and windows at first floor level replace existing modern casement windows that are incongruous with the area. Because the existing house and windows do not contain historic fabric and are of a modern design, the contemporary proposed windows will not detract from the conservation area and will be barely visible from any public property.

- **Replace rear windows to the 2nd and 3rd floors with timber box sash windows.**

The Replacement timber box sash windows to the second and third floors of the rear elevation are more visible from public property i.e. Crabtree Fields And as such we proposed to replace these windows with authentic and matching sash windows that will enhance conservation area conformity.

- **Air conditioning condenser to the main roof.**

The existing mansard roof extension is mostly clad in dark slate or lead flashing as such these roof extensions despite modern insulation can become very hot during the summer months and with every year this problem is increasing. Owners and occupants would like to install air conditioning to the top floor to allow these rooms to be habitable during the hottest months of the year.

The proposed air conditioning unit to the main roof inset away from all roof edges in order to be less visible and no impact on neighbouring properties.

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Figure 6: Existing and Proposed Front elevation



Figure 7: Existing and proposed Rear elevation



6.0 Amenity

Changes to the front of the house. We do not consider that any of the alterations to the front of the house will have any effect on neighbouring properties amenities as the windows will be installed into the same structural openings and will not increase overlooking or light pollution.

Changes to the rear of the house. Changes to the upper windows at 3rd and second floors will again be installed into the existing structural openings and so there will be no increased overlooking or loss of privacy.

Although, the glazing first floor level on the rear elevation will increase in size it will be in the same position as the existing windows which already overlook the rear gardens. Any loss of privacy as a result is considered to be very slight.

The alterations at ground floor and basement levels on the rear elevation are entirely concealed by the very high rear and side garden walls and so there will be no impact as a result of these changes on any of the adjoining neighbours.

4.2 Sustainability & Environmental Considerations

- Energy Efficiency: Upgraded glazing and improved insulation help reduce heat loss while maximizing natural light.
- Materials: Locally sourced or matching stock brick ensures lower transport impact; proposed use of windows can be in line with sustainability goals.
- Biodiversity: As this is a predominantly internal reconfiguration and with changes to the external fenestration, no significant biodiversity impacts are anticipated.

5.3 Policy Compliance

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The scheme preserves the significance of the conservation area (no harm or “less than substantial harm”), and any minor changes are outweighed by public benefits—improved accommodation, fabric repairs, and aesthetic enhancements.
- Camden Local Plan (2017):
 - D1 (Design): The proposal respects existing forms, improves architectural quality, and uses high-quality materials.
 - D2 (Heritage): The setting, character, and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area are preserved and enhanced.
- Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy: The choice of materials, scale, and retention of the building’s fundamental massing align with the area’s guidelines.

6.0 Access Statement

6.1 Site Access & Movement

- Pedestrian Access: Remains via Colville Place. As a small mews, the street is pedestrian-friendly, and the proposal does not alter access routes.
- Vehicular Access: No on-site parking is proposed or required. Nearby public transport (Goodge Street station) and cycle hire facilities encourage sustainable travel.

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- Internal Circulation: Reconfigured stairs and hallways provide a more coherent route through the basement to top floor. While full accessibility might be constrained by the narrow mews footprint, the design optimizes what is feasible in a historic context.

7.0 Community Safety & Construction

- Site Security: Temporary hoardings or fencing will safeguard the site during works.
- Health & Safety: Work mainly pertains to internal reconfiguration and the addition of new fenestration at the rear; scaffolding will be used for external roof/wall treatments, in accordance with standard practice.
- Construction Management: A method statement or Construction Management Plan (CMP) can be provided if required by Camden. This will address deliveries, waste disposal, noise abatement, and hours of work.

8.0 Conclusion

The proposed scheme at 17 Colville Place aims to:

- Enhance the building's internal functionality, creating a more coherent living environment from basement to third floor.
- Respect the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area by retaining the building's front and upgrading its façade with historically appropriate fenestration.
- Improve the rear elevation, establishing a stronger indoor-outdoor connection through glazed doors/balconies, while maintaining sympathetic materials.

In doing so, the proposal aligns with national, regional, and local planning policies:

- NPPF (2021) on conserving heritage assets,
- The London Plan (2021) on delivering high-quality design,
- Camden Local Plan (2017) Policies D1 and D2 regarding design and heritage, and
- Charlotte Street Conservation Area guidelines on sympathetic materials, massing, and roof forms.

Overall, the development will make a positive contribution to the ongoing vitality of Colville Place, ensuring the building remains fit for modern living while retaining its place in the rich architectural tapestry of Fitzrovia. We trust this statement demonstrates the careful thought, design rationale, and heritage sensitivities underpinning the proposal.

Please see enclosed existing and proposed plans, elevations and sections illustrating the design of the extension.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Regards,

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